



Title:	Middle School Assessment Policy
Summary:	Policy and Procedures relating to Middle School Assessment
Intended Audience:	Students, staff, parents
Author:	MYP Pedagogical Leadership team
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NESA Reference:	Registered and Accredited Individual Non-government Schools (NSW) Manual Reference Number 3.3.1.2 and 5.1
IB Standard:	B1.5c
Distribution:	Web and Internal

Background

The Armidale School values and actively encourages each individual to pursue their highest academic potential through effort and engagement. A part of academic engagement is through assessment. Assessment is a practice that involves all stakeholders; it is integral to all teaching and learning. The aim of MYP assessment is to support and encourage student learning, through both formative and summative assessments as well as to facilitate the evaluation, adjustment, direction and redirection of curriculum planning and delivery.

Policy

Assessment involves teachers, students and parents and therefore this Policy is in place to provide a common understanding of assessment in the Middle School. This Policy should be used along with NESAs Assessment documents, The Middle School Academic Honesty Policy, and is guided by The Armidale School Stage 5 and Stage 6 Assessment Policies.

Philosophy

Assessment in the MYP aims to support and encourage student learning by providing feedback on the learning process as well as inform, enhance and improve the teaching process. As such, students and teachers will commit to using assessment where it contributes positively to learning. Through participating in ongoing assessment, students should be able to receive timely feedback that can guide their learning. By displaying the IB Learner Profile attribute of 'reflective', students should be able to use assessments to feed-forward into their future learning experiences allowing them to become better thinkers, inquirers and become more knowledgeable.

In the MYP, teachers make decisions about student achievement using their professional judgement, guided by mandated criteria that are public, known in advance and precise, ensuring that assessment is transparent. Across a variety of assessment tasks, teachers use descriptors to identify students' achievement levels against established assessment criteria. This 'criterion-related' approach represents a philosophy of assessment that allows teachers to work together to establish common standards against which they evaluate each student's achievement holistically.

What is Assessment at The Armidale School

Assessment is integral to all teaching and learning. The aim of assessment at TAS is to provide students with opportunities to demonstrate their learning at the highest level, and as such teachers develop rigorous tasks that embrace a variety of assessment strategies.

Assessment at The Armidale School aims to:

- support and encourage student learning by providing feedback on the learning process;
- inform, enhance and improve the teaching process;
- provide opportunity for students to exhibit transfer of skills across disciplines, such as in interdisciplinary unit assessments;
- promote positive student attitudes towards learning;
- promote a deep understanding of subject content by supporting students in their inquiries set in real- world contexts;
- promote the development of critical- and creative-thinking skills;
- distinguish between internal summative assessment and the supporting formative processes;
- focus on the most accurate demonstration of student performance, rather than mechanically and uncritically averaging achievement levels over given reporting periods.

Assessment is made up of both on-going formative assessment, as well as summative assessments that are taken towards the end of a unit. The Australian Government requirement of students sitting NAPLAN tests in Year 7 inform students, parents and staff of a child's progress compared to all other Australian students in the areas of Reading, Writing, Spelling, Grammar & Punctuation and Numeracy. Staff collaboratively analyse the student's results to impact future teaching and learning. In addition, in school Progressive Achievement Tests in Reading and Mathematics occurs at the start of each school year. Similarly, staff will use this information to inform teaching and learning.

What is Formative Assessment or "Assessment FOR Learning" and "Assessment AS Learning"?

Formative assessment is assessment for learning, and is on-going through the teaching and learning process. It provides information that is used in order to plan the next stage in learning. It helps teachers and students find out what the students already know and can do. Formative assessment should directly inform teaching and learning and should shape curriculum planning.

Formative assessment aims to promote learning by giving regular and frequent feedback throughout the learning process. This process helps learners to improve knowledge and understanding, to foster self-motivation and enthusiasm for learning, to engage in

thoughtful reflection, to develop a capacity for self-assessment, and recognise criteria for success.

Assessment AS learning occurs when students are their own assessors. Students monitor their own learning, ask questions and use a range of strategies to decide what they know and can do, and how to use assessment for new learning.

Assessment FOR learning enables teachers to use information about students' knowledge, understanding and skills to inform their teaching and to provide feedback to students about their learning and how to improve.

Students should be engaging in self and peer-assessment opportunities to develop the confidence needed to be in control of their own learning.

What is summative assessment or "Assessment OF Learning"?

Assessment OF learning, summative assessment, assists teachers in using evidence of student learning to assess achievement against predetermined learning goals, outcomes, objectives or standards. It usually occurs at defined key points either during a unit of work or at the end of a unit of work, term or semester. At TAS we believe that summative assessment is an integral part of the learning process. These summative tasks are, where possible, common across the grade and are used to assist in the determination of future learning programs for the individual student.

Teachers make decisions about student achievement using their professional judgment, guided by the MYP task-specific criteria that are public, known in advance and precise, ensuring that assessment is transparent. Students must be able to recall, adapt and apply knowledge and skills to new questions and contexts. Students need to understand assessment expectations, standards and practices, which teachers introduce early and naturally in teaching, as well as in class and homework activities.

Across a variety of assessment tasks teachers use descriptors to identify students' achievement levels against established assessment criteria. In the earlier years of education internal (school-based) assessment uses a "best-fit" approach in which teachers work together to establish common standards against which they evaluate each student's achievement holistically. This "criterion-related" approach represents a philosophy of assessment that is neither "norm-referenced" (where students must be compared to each other and to an expected distribution of achievement) nor "criterion-referenced" (where students must master all strands of specific criteria at lower achievement levels before they can be considered to have achieved the next level).

All MYP summative assessments will be reported on using the MYP grade descriptors, and should be preceded by an assessment notification, with task-specific criteria attached.

Why Assessment?

Assessment:

- Provides opportunities for teachers to gather evidence about student achievement in relation to outcomes;
- Enables students to demonstrate what they know and can do;
- Clarifies student understanding of concepts and promotes deeper understanding; and
- Provides evidence that current understanding is a suitable basis for future learning;

Assessment activities should:

- Be valid and be based on syllabus and program outcomes;
- Include task-specific criteria to clarify for students what aspects of learning are being assessed;
- Enable students to demonstrate their learning in a range of different contexts;
- Be reliable, be free from bias and provide evidence that accurately represents a student's knowledge, understanding and skills;
- Enable students and teachers to use feedback effectively and reflect on the learning process;
- Be inclusive of and accessible to all students; and
- Be part of an ongoing process where progress is monitored.

Guidelines For Assessment Schedules and Notifications

Each department must produce assessment schedules for each Middle Year subject being studied by a cohort, and sent to the Assistant Director of Studies at the start of each year. Assessment schedules for each course must be available to students from the start of the year via CANVAS.

Assessment schedules must specify:

- The nature of tasks; and
- The week in which they will be completed

Assessment notifications must be received in writing and available via CANVAS at least two weeks prior and must include:

- The nature of the task
- The due date
- The course objectives
- Task-specific criteria
- In the case of a take home task:
 - word limit (where required)

- information regarding ability to submit drafts (where required)
- details of submission (including who is to be handed to, the time that it must be submitted by, the format of submission eg hardcopy or emailed document)
- any recommendations regarding breaking down the task or partial submission requirements
- other information as deemed necessary by the teacher
- In the case of a class task:
 - date, time and location of assessment
 - length of the task
 - equipment to bring
 - recommended preparation (eg past papers or practice questions)
 - other information as deemed necessary by the teacher

Attendance records must record those students absent when assessment schedules or task notifications are issued and it is the joint responsibility of the teacher issuing this information and the student to ensure that all students absent at the time of issue receive a copy at the earliest possible time on return to that class. All new students who join the class during the year must also receive a copy of the assessment schedule. Assessment notifications in the Middle School do not have to be printed, although that is ideal, but must be available on CANVAS. Teachers are to assist students in understanding the details of the notification and what is required.

Students are entitled to feedback in the form of grades, and/or comments, preferably returned within two school weeks of submission. Where possible, students should be given the opportunity to check the marking before results are 'officially' recorded.

If, after the completion of a task, it is found that the task design was faulty, the Coordinator will recommend changes to the published assessment schedule for that course that may include a substitute task or exclude the task and reweight other tasks.

Departments should maintain a register of student work samples. These work samples will allow departments to evaluate the effectiveness of tasks in achieving their objectives and provide for consistent application of syllabus standards over a number of years by different teachers. Departments are required to keep at least three work samples demonstrating the range of student achievement for each assessment task completed.

Responsibilities of Students

Middle School students are responsible for:

- Ensuring that they retain and understand the school's Assessment and Academic Honesty Policies;
- Ensure that they know when assessment tasks are scheduled and have a copy of the appropriate assessment notification at least two weeks prior. If students are absent

from school when notifications are given out they should speak or email their teacher as soon as possible to get the necessary notification, remembering that a copy will be placed on CANVAS;

- Ensuring that, if they are away when an assessment task is scheduled, they negotiate with their classroom teacher the best time to complete the task;
- Ensuring that once an assessment notification is given out, that they understand the requirements of the task – and if not, should speak to their teacher to clarify understanding;
- Attempting or submitting each assessment task on the due date to the best of their ability. Students must submit assessment tasks on the due date and by the time specified on the notification. **Penalties for late submission may apply, however, student achievement grades will not be impacted by a late submission.**

Responsibilities of Teachers

- In order to provide students with opportunities to achieve the highest level, MYP teachers collaboratively develop rigorous tasks that embrace a variety of assessment strategies.
- All teachers at The Armidale School share the responsibility of ensuring that correct assessment procedures are followed, that allows for consistency throughout the school.
- In all Middle Year assessments, teachers should use the prescribed subject-group objectives using the assessment criteria for each subject group in each year of the programme as well as identified NESA outcomes.
- All assessment notifications must be uploaded on the CANVAS page for the course at least two week before the task is due.
- Attendance records must record those students absent when assessment schedules or task notifications are issued and it is the joint responsibility of the teacher issuing this information and the student to ensure that all students absent at the time of issue receive a copy at the earliest possible time on return to that class.
- All new students who join the class during the year must also receive a copy of the assessment schedule. Assessment notifications may be emailed to the student rather than handed out in hard copy.

Responsibilities of MYP Pedagogical Leadership Team

- To ensure that teachers are following correct assessment procedures;
- To support teachers in the development of rigorous assessment task; and
- To pass any concerns onto the Director of Studies in a timely manner

Malpractice

If there is any evidence of malpractice, teachers (and coordinators) must refer to the Academic Honesty Policy, and follow the outlined procedures. However, it is important that teachers refer to the Academic Honesty Policy when handing out notifications in order to promote this amongst students and reinforce principled practice.

Assessment Records

Any result used in determining a student's MYP grade level and NESA grade should be kept on a central marks register in each department. The MYP grade descriptors can be found in Appendix 1, and should inform how teachers award a final grade for a subject area.

- If this is a computer record, it should be backed up in a separate location and the backup should be consistent with the current record, ie kept up to date.
- Hard copies of marks in teachers' files or markbooks are considered suitable backup.
- Records of all tasks, and the outcomes that they assess, must be kept by the department along with work samples.
- The method used for determining grades should follow the guidelines set out by the International Baccalaureate and NESA.
- Marks or grades from individual assessment tasks should be added to the department's central register immediately after each task to avoid loss.
- At the conclusion of an MYP course, a copy of the markbook must be given to the Director of Studies.

Wider Reading

The Armidale School Stage 5 and Stage 6 Assessment Policies.

TAS Educational Philosophy document

Middle Years Program MYP: From Principles into Practice. International Baccalaureate. October 2016. Hyperlink: https://resources.ibo.org/data/m_0_mypxx_guu-nc_1405_3_e.pdf

Appendix 1

MYP general grade descriptors

To arrive at a criterion levels total for each student, teachers add together the student's final achievement levels in all criteria of the subject group.

Schools using the MYP 1–7 scale should use the grade boundary guidelines table that follows to determine final grades in each year of the MYP. The table provides a means of converting the criterion levels total into a grade based on a scale of 1–7.

Grade	Boundary guidelines	Descriptor
1	1–5	Produces work of very limited quality. Conveys many significant misunderstandings or lacks understanding of most concepts and contexts. Very rarely demonstrates critical or creative thinking. Very inflexible, rarely using knowledge or skills.
2	6–9	Produces work of limited quality. Expresses misunderstandings or significant gaps in understanding for many concepts and contexts. Infrequently demonstrates critical or creative thinking. Generally inflexible in the use of knowledge and skills, infrequently applying knowledge and skills.
3	10–14	Produces work of an acceptable quality. Communicates basic understanding of many concepts and contexts, with occasionally significant misunderstandings or gaps. Begins to demonstrate some basic critical and creative thinking. Is often inflexible in the use of knowledge and skills, requiring support even in familiar classroom situations.
4	15–18	Produces good-quality work. Communicates basic understanding of most concepts and contexts with few misunderstandings and minor gaps. Often demonstrates basic critical and creative thinking. Uses knowledge and skills with some flexibility in familiar classroom situations, but requires support in unfamiliar situations.
5	19–23	Produces generally high-quality work. Communicates secure understanding of concepts and contexts. Demonstrates critical and creative thinking, sometimes with sophistication. Uses knowledge and skills in familiar classroom and real-world situations and, with support, some unfamiliar real-world situations.
6	24–27	Produces high-quality, occasionally innovative work. Communicates extensive understanding of concepts and contexts. Demonstrates critical and creative thinking, frequently with sophistication. Uses knowledge and skills in familiar and unfamiliar classroom and real-world situations, often with independence.
7	28–32	Produces high-quality, frequently innovative work. Communicates comprehensive, nuanced understanding of concepts and contexts. Consistently demonstrates sophisticated critical and creative thinking. Frequently transfers knowledge and skills with independence and expertise in a variety of complex classroom and real-world situations.